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The modern Spanish equivalent of *fondo en* is *en el fondo*. As this phrase does not appear in the dictionaries, it may be well to append some instances of its use.

¡Soy en el fondo un bendito!

Poem of A. Bonilla y San Martín, cited by Icaza,  
*Supercherías cervantinas*, p. 284.

En el fondo tenía las veleidades de Fernando. (Baroja, *Camino de perfección*, Madrid, 1913, p. 244.)

Se le atacaba [á Trigo] . . . por la torturada complicación de su estilo. En el fondo porque vendía más libros que nadie. (*El Gráfico*, Nov., 1916, p. 33.)

CHARLES PHILIP WAGNER.

*University of Michigan.*

### OLD FRENCH *Despoesteir*

An investigation of the past participle *desposteis* (in four syllables) occurring in line 7480 of Bolderston's edition (Oxford, 1912) of Richier's *Vie de Saint Remi* has disclosed an interesting situation with regard to the treatment of the O. F. verb "to dispossess" in Godefroy's *Dictionnaire de l'Ancienne Langue Française*. Godefroy lists *despoestir*, *despostir*, and *depostir*, but no forms in which the uncontracted ending *-eir* occurs. The etymon is *\*dispotestāture*, which would ordinarily have given O. F. *despoesteir*, contracting later to (1) *desposteir* or (2) *despoestir*, and finally to (3) *despostir*. Of these forms Godefroy lists (2) and (3), while (1) is attested by its appearance in the *Saint Remi*, the form occurring without variant in both of the extant mss. Since (1) and (2) are obviously descendants of the same parent, it is not unreasonable to assume the existence of the full form, *despoesteir*, in which neither contraction had yet taken place. The non-appearance of forms in *-eir* other than the past participle in the *Remi* is surprising, especially if one compare a similar case, that of the adjective *\*potestātivum*, which gives (1) the full form *poesteif*; (2) both contractions, *posteif* and *poestif*; and (3) the final contraction, *postif*. All these forms are cited by Godefroy, though under the heading *poestif* instead of the probably earlier *poesteif*. In both adjective and verb the retention of the Latin *ā* as O. F. fem. *e* is rather to be expected than not, especially in the earlier forms, in which the force of analogy due to the existence of the noun *poesté* (from *potestātem*) might readily have been exerted. A revision of Godefroy's entry, by listing the verb under the full form *despoesteir*, with a mention of this occurrence of *desposteir*, would seem desirable. Further search may disclose

other forms in *-eir*. The disappearance of the *s* in the prefix of the verb may be due to a formation with Latin *de* instead of *dis*, or to the fall of *s* before the consonant, where it may have been silent even when written. In any case this question is not germane to the main point under discussion. It should be stated that the significance of this form was first pointed out by my former teacher, Professor E. S. Sheldon.

HENRY GRATTAN DOYLE.

*George Washington University.*

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### ON COLERIDGE'S *Ancient Mariner*

It seems now to be generally accepted that *The Ancient Mariner* is a sort of allegory, picturing human life as a Pilgrim's Progress upon the sea. The poem contains not only a mysterious or supernatural element, which none can fail to see, but also carries a deep mystical and symbolic meaning which requires careful interpretation. The larger part of the poem lends itself readily to such an interpretation, and its meaning has become tolerably clear. The mariner starts out on the voyage of life, only to find himself at once getting into all sorts of trouble. This seems symbolic of the sins that overtake men in life. After penance he starts on his return home, rounding out his voyage at the port from which he embarked. There are, however, certain difficult points in the interpretation. On his return voyage the Mariner is aided by the Pilot, the Pilot's boy, and the Hermit. These come out in the Pilot's boat to welcome him as he draws near, and finally rescue him from the sea as his ship goes down. Little is given in the poem to indicate the meaning of these, but of the Hermit the Mariner says:

It is the Hermit good!  
 He singeth loud his godly hymns  
 That he makes in the wood.  
 He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away  
 The Albatross's blood.

He further speaks of him as living in the wood, where "He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—," praying beside the trees in the forest. In the margin Coleridge calls him "The Hermit of the Wood," and evidently intends to portray in him Nature's High Priest, who shrives the Mariner from his sins against Nature. The Mariner has sinned primarily against God's creatures, or Nature, as symbolized by the Albatross, and only the Hermit, as Priest of Nature, can shrive him from this sin.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy, however, are not so easily interpreted. They perform no such function in the poem as the Hermit.